

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER
NOV 13 2006

Application No.: 09/824330

Case No.: 56081US002

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 14 are pending in this application. All the pending claims stand rejected. By this amendment, claim 1 is amended and claims 3, 8 and 12 are cancelled. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application.

Support for the Amendment

Claim 1 has been amended with respect to the selection of variables and the materials of the combinatorial library. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in original claims 3, 8 and 12, on page 4, lines 4-7, on page 7, lines 1-3, and on page 8, lines 21-25. No new matter is added by this amendment.

Rejections under §102 and §103

Claims 1-4, 6 and 8-12 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(a) as being anticipated by Bergh et al., US Patent No. 6,749,814. In addition, claims 5 and 7, and claims 13 and 14 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bergh et al. in view of Priddy (US 6,572,814) and/or Citron (US 6,586,541), respectively. Because the Bergh reference, both alone and in combination with Priddy and/or Citron fails to teach or suggest all the elements of amended claim 1, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

The Examiner has asserted that Bergh describes changing a variable, namely temperature, between reactors to generate different products. In its amended form, claim 1 recites a specific list of reaction variables that does not include temperature. Although Bergh teaches that other variables, such as residence time and pressure, can also be varied among reactors, the portions of Bergh cited by the Examiner do not describe varying those parameters over time within the same reactor. For example, in col. 45, lines 3-19, Bergh describes varying residence times by providing several different reactors each having a different volume or flow rate, but Berg does not disclose varying the residence time in a given reactor over time. Specifically, Bergh states:

Residence times can be maintained substantially the same for each of the microreactors or can be varied for a group of microreactors or for each of the

Application No.: 09/824330

Case No.: 56081US002

microreactors. In one embodiment, a plurality of microreactors suitable for providing varying residence times for different microreactors is provided by fabricating the microreactors with varying volumes. With reference to FIG. 9, for example, the volume of each reactor well 235 could be varied between one group of microreactors and another group, or between each individual microreactor. In an alternative embodiment, a flow-distribution system suitable for providing varying residence times for different microreactors (now having substantially the same volume) is provided by fabricating flow distribution networks having varying flow restriction (and correspondingly varying conductance) between different flow channels such that the flowrates to different microreactors (or set of microreactors) varies.

Thus, Bergh describes varying residence times, pressure, etc. by using multiple reactors each having a different residence time, pressure, etc.; however, Bergh does not describe varying the residence time, pressure, etc. at different points in time within a single plug flow reactor to produce different samples of material that are collected or combined into a library of materials. Neither Priddy nor Citron compensate for these deficiencies. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are patentable over the cited references.

Conclusion

Applicants request reconsideration of the Application in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks. Allowance of claims 1-14, as amended, at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Nov. 13, 2006

Date

By: Sean J. Edman

Sean J. Edman, Reg. No.: 42,506

Telephone No.: 651-575-1796

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
Facsimile No.: 651-736-3833